

REMARKS

The Examiner's action dated January 24, 2006, has been received, and its contents carefully noted.

Regarding the discussion on page 2 of the action of the desirability for section headings, the Examiner is hereby authorized to insert those headings at appropriate points in the specification if he believes that this would be desirable.

In response to the formal rejection presented at the top of page 3 of the action, claim 6 has been amended to depend from claim 5, thus providing antecedent basis for "the reserve of air" and "the sleeve". Claim 6 has been further amended to provide antecedent basis for "the bell".

Accordingly, it is requested that this rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

The Examiner's indication that claims 6 and 8 would be allowable if the formal rejections of claim 6 were overcome and claim 8 were amended to be in independent form is noted with appreciation.

Since, however, it is believed that claim 1 clearly distinguishes patentably over the applied references, claims 6 and 8 have been retained in dependent form.

The rejection of claims 1-5 and 9 as unpatentable over Kueser in view of Morton is respectfully traversed for the reason that the rejected claims, and particularly independent claim 1, define a pressing iron having a structure that is not disclosed in the references and that is not obvious from any reasonable combination of the teachings of those references.

The present invention is directed to a steam pressing iron whose reservoir can be filled by tilting the iron in a forward direction, and containing a vent circuit that assures a good venting of the water reservoir to the surrounding atmosphere while, at the same time, limiting the risks associated with escape of hot water from the reservoir in different operating positions of the iron, particularly when the iron is tilted forward to allow filling of the reservoir.

To achieve these results, the iron according to the invention includes a filling opening that is located on the rear face of the iron to allow the reservoir to be filled by holding the iron in a position in which it is tilted, or rocked, forward, together with a vent circuit having one end that opens at the rear part of the reservoir and an opposite end that is in contact with the surrounding air and is located in the upper front part of the iron. In further accordance with the invention, the vent circuit includes a pipe of small cross section that opens in the rear part of the reservoir and that is prolonged by a hollow end element of larger cross-section, the hollow end element extending downwardly and having an opening in its lower part.

It is impossible, without the aid of hindsight, to imagine any reasoning that could justify combining the teachings of the two references in a manner to arrive at the claimed invention.

The explanation of the rejection suggests that the only difference between claim 1 and the disclosure of Kueser is that Kueser does not suggest a filling opening with a sleeve extending into a reservoir and located at the rear of the reservoir. It is then asserted that these features are

disclosed by Morton and that it "would have been obvious... to construct the filling opening of the reservoir of Kueser as including an extending sleeve into the reservoir and a locating this at the rear of the reservoir".

Of course, replacement of the filling opening of Kueser with that disclosed by Morton would not result in an iron having the structure defined in claim 1 of the present application. Specifically, even if the Kueser iron were modified in the manner suggested in the explanation of the rejection, the resulting iron would no longer have an opening at the front that places conduit 38 in contact with the surrounding air.

Moreover, relocating the filling opening in the manner suggested in support of the rejection would defeat essential purposes of the Kueser invention. For example, the beneficial result described in that reference at column 3, lines 30-37 would be lost.

In other words, the modification suggested in the explanation of the rejection would be contrary to the teachings of Kueser.

In order to better understand the practical impossibility of combining the teachings of the applied references, the structure disclosed in each reference will be described in greater detail.

Kueser discloses an iron having a reservoir 18 provided with a filling orifice 24 disposed at the front of the iron to allow the iron to be filled by tilting it toward the rear. This iron is equipped with a vent circuit 38 having an end 45 that opens into a water filling cavity 28 in order

to be in contact with the outside air. Circuit 38 includes a conduit member 40 that opens at the upper front part of the reservoir through an elbow fitting 42. There is no indication in the reference disclosure that elbow fitting 42 has a larger cross section than conduit member 40. In addition, vent circuit 38 is intended to prevent a pocket of air or steam from being trapped in rear part 48 of reservoir 18 during back and forth movements executed by the iron during ironing. In effect, such an air pocket can expand, under the effect of heat, to provoke escape of water through the filling opening. Thus, the aim of the Kueser invention is to prevent water from rising out of the reservoir through the filling opening during ironing.

Morton discloses an iron having a water reservoir 15 provided with a filling opening 16 located at the rear of the iron. It is clear from the disclosure of this reference that the iron is intended to be filled while being maintained in a horizontal orientation and not while being rocked forward. This iron further includes a vent 64 situated at the front of reservoir 15, and it would appear, from the position of this vent, that if the iron were rocked forward during filling, the result would be a flow of water from the reservoir and through opening 69 leading to vent 64 and thus through conduit 38 and steam chamber 39. Thus, this reference discloses an iron having a water reservoir furnished with a filling orifice situated at the rear of the iron but the reference is not concerned with providing an iron in which filling of the reservoir is effectuated by holding the iron rocked forward.

Thus, claim 1 distinguishes over any feasible combination of the teachings of the applied references by its recitation of an iron having a filling opening located on the

rear face of the iron so that filling of the reservoir is carried out by holding the iron rocked forwards, and by its further recitation that the reservoir has a vent circuit presenting an end opening at the rear part of reservoir and an end, in contact with the surrounding air, located in the upper front part of the iron. Claim 1 additionally specifies that the vent circuit comprises a pipe of small cross section which opens in the upper rear part of the reservoir and is prolonged by a hollow end element of larger cross-section.

For reasons noted above, there is no reasonable combination of the teachings of the applied references that would result in an iron having a filling opening located at its rear face and a vent circuit that opens to the surrounding air at the front part of the iron. Furthermore, as also noted above, there is no disclosure in Kueser that elbow fitting 42 has a larger cross section, which would of course be the internal cross section, than the conduit member 40.

Claim 2 further distinguishes patentably over the applied references by its recitation that the end element has the form of a bell widening from the top to the bottom. Although it is asserted in the explanation of the rejection that fitting 42 of Kueser has such a shape, this assertion is clearly incorrect. There is no indication that the passage in elbow fitting 42 widens from the top to the bottom.

Claim 3 further distinguishes patentably over the applied references by its recitation that the vent circuit has a buffer chamber interposed between the pipe and the end of the vent circuit in communication with the surrounding air. If the iron disclosed by Kueser were modified in the manner alleged to support a rejection of claim 1, by relocating the filling opening to the rear of the iron, the resulting

modified iron would no longer have any space that could be compared to a buffer chamber in communication with the surrounding air and located in the upper front part of the body of the iron.

The limitation presented in claim 4 clearly finds no disclosure in the applied references. Specifically, there is no indication whatsoever of the relation between the volume of space 28 and that of tubular member 40.

Claim 9 further distinguishes over the applied references in the same manner as claim 3.

The rejection of claims 7 and 10 on the basis of the references discussed above and further in view of Valente is traversed at least for the reason that these claims depend from claim 1, and should be considered allowable along therewith.

Added claim 11 further distinguishes over any reasonable combination of the teachings of the applied references by the added recitation of a removable stopper for closing the filling opening when the iron is in use. As has been pointed out above, the provision of such a stopper would be directly contrary to the teachings of Kueser since when that iron is in use, the filling opening must be opened to allow the escape of steam and hot air.

In view of the foregoing, it is requested that all of the rejections of record be reconsidered and withdrawn, that pending claims 1-11 be allowed and that the application be found in allowable condition.

If the above amendment should not now place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is

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invited to call undersigned counsel to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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